SENATE BILL No. 1538

Introduced by Senator Simitian

February 24, 2012

An act to amend Section 116355 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to drinking water.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1538, as introduced, Simitian. Drinking water: Safe Drinking Water Plan for California.

The Calderon-Sher Safe Drinking Water Act of 1996 requires the State Department of Public Health to, among other things, adopt regulations relating to primary and secondary drinking water standards for contaminants in drinking water. Under this law the department is required every 5 years to submit to the Legislature a comprehensive Safe Drinking Water Plan for California, including specific components.

This bill would require the department to include in the plan a discussion of current and post bond moneys available and spent to improve California's water quality and an accounting of which water systems received bond moneys and the types of projects that were funded.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 116355 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

116355. (a) Once every five years the department shall submit to the Legislature a comprehensive Safe Drinking Water Plan for California.

(b) The Safe Drinking Water Plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

(1) An analysis of the overall quality of California's drinking water and the identification of specific water quality problems.

(2) Types and levels of contaminants found in public drinking water systems that have less than 10,000 service connections. The discussion of these water systems shall include the following:

(A) Estimated costs of requiring these systems to meet primary drinking water standards and public health goals.

(B) Recommendations for actions that could be taken by the Legislature, the department, and these systems to improve water quality.

(3) A discussion and analysis of the known and potential health risks that may be associated with drinking water contamination in California.

(4) An evaluation of how existing water quality information systems currently maintained by local or state agencies can be more effectively used to protect drinking water.

(5) An evaluation of the research needed to develop inexpensive methods and instruments to ensure better screening and detection of waterborne chemicals, and inexpensive detection methods that could be used by small utilities and consumers to detect harmful microbial agents in drinking water.

(6) An analysis of the technical and economic viability and the health benefits of various treatment techniques that can be used to reduce levels of trihalomethanes, lead, nitrates, synthetic organic chemicals, micro-organisms, and other contaminants in drinking water.

(7) A discussion of alternative methods of financing the construction, installation, and operation of new treatment technologies, including, but not limited to user charges, state or local taxes, state planning and construction grants, loans, and loan guarantees.

(8) A discussion of sources of revenue presently available, and projected to be available, to public water systems to meet current and future expenses.

(9) A discussion of current and post bond moneys available and spent to improve California's water quality and an accounting of which water systems received bond moneys and the types of projects that were funded.

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(10) An analysis of the current cost of drinking water paid by residential, business, and industrial consumers based on a statewide survey of large, medium, and small public water systems.

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(11) Specific recommendations, including recommendations developed pursuant to paragraph (6), to improve the quality of drinking water in California and a detailed five-year implementation program.

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